

UNLOCKING **OUR**
POTENTIAL
DIOCESE OF ST ASAPH

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



Introduction from the Bishop of St Asaph

Welcome to our 2019 annual report, which details the way elements of diocesan life are evolving to enable us to serve as a Church. The good news is our recent focus on growth is slowing the rate of decline. Many of our churches are growing, many are holding their own, but in some, decline still offsets that change. Controversially, perhaps, it seems to me that it is those Mission Areas who have been most reluctant to embrace change that seem to be slowest in seeing growth.

Mission Areas are designed to help us to prompt each other into a greater liveliness of witness and ministry. The diocese is investing in programmes like Hope and a Future and Leading your Church into Growth to assist all of us, ordained and lay, to grasp the vision of how we can be faithful to Christ, and to his command to go and “make disciples”. We seek for growth – in faith, in numbers and in service – not for the sake of propping up who we have been, but who, in Christ, we may become.

The core of our faith must be a living introduction to the Lord of Life: he who died upon the cross to atone for our sins, and who rose again to new life so that humanity might inherit and discover fullness of life. If our worship or our witness ever ceases to convey repentance and faith effectively, then it is our worship and witness that must change, not the truth which we proclaim.

SO WHAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE?

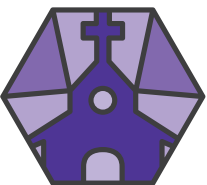
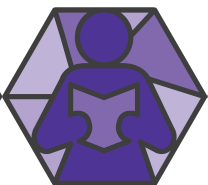
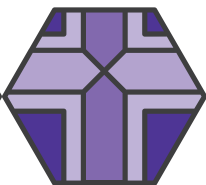
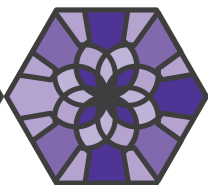
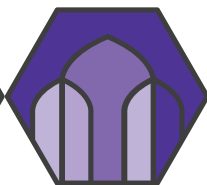
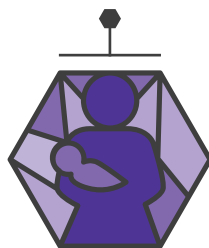
- Excitement about Jesus Christ in the first place. Unless we are genuinely excited about our relationship with the Lord, we have nothing to attract people.
- Allowing others to get excited about Christ is the second. It is a sad but peculiar thing that sometimes we Christians seem to take a perverse pleasure in squashing the faith of others.
- A readiness to let go, and let God, is the third. There are only two ways of living, said one Christian writer, “I did it my way”, or “Thy will be done.”

AND THERE IS GOOD NEWS TO CELEBRATE

Hundreds of our laity have become excited about the possibilities of growth through their engagement with "Leading your Church into Growth" and other mission courses.

The diocese has run extremely practical social engagements typified by our work with the "Cold Weather Shelter" in Wrexham, and other projects.

Our fifty-one Church schools have grown in the education that they offer and are educating over six thousand young people to think about faith for themselves.



60 laity have become motivated learners by engaging with the "Theology for Life" course taught by St Padarn's Institute.

We run a successful Youth Church, Youth Forum and an annual Youth Pilgrimage.

Lay volunteers have come forward in unprecedented numbers to participate in Mission Area Conferences, and in exploring vocations to lay ministry.

My ministry brings me into contact, to a greater or lesser degree, with the initiatives set out above and they all deserve praise, but the things that I have particularly experienced in my own ministry include:

- Co-operation among churches in Mission Areas to share financial burdens.
- The commitment of all ages in Confirmations. Numbers here are picking up after substantial decline, but with thirty confirmed this Easter alone, and people from nine to ninety coming forward to make commitments, every Confirmation is exciting.
- Growing numbers seeking Ordination. The first year I was in the diocese, there was no Petertide Ordination. No candidates. Over ten years, numbers have steadily grown, so that this year, six priests and six deacons will be ordained – numbers will be larger next year, and larger again the year after next. For this, I am grateful for the hard work of some excellent Vocation Advisers and Diocesan Directors of Ordinands, but all of us must take credit for becoming a Church in which people are inspired to serve.

- Growing numbers of young ordinands and postulants. We have over 30 under 30s exploring vocation with Cymry'r Groes.
- A passionate commitment to mission in Standing Committee and the Diocesan Board of Finance.
- The possibility of radical change and growth through the Hope Street initiative.

None of this would be possible without the labour, enthusiasm and commitment of many, and their readiness to be followers where God is leading. So thank you – to all my colleagues in the ordained ministry, in the Diocesan team, in lay ministry, among the worshipping congregations, for your faithfulness, your unstinting labour, and thanks most of all, for the continuing and correcting guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Gregory



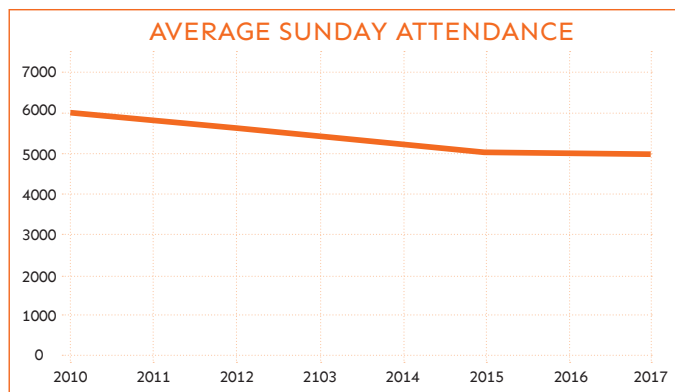
Growth

by Tracey White, Director of Resources

In June 2019, the diocese was awarded the first grant from the Church in Wales' Evangelism Fund. The £1.9m grant will support Hope Street, a new type of Christian community in Wrexham run in partnership with existing churches and aimed at growing engagement with young people and families. Expertise and experience will flow from Hope Street to support growth in other parts of the diocese.

In 2018 Mission Areas across the diocese were encouraged to grow their Sunday congregations and aim at a growth target of 10%. While, this target wasn't reached by all, it did illustrate interesting areas of growth, often outside traditional Sunday services.

The focus on growth resulted in a significant slowdown in the rate of decline across the diocese: Based on 19 out of 21 Mission Areas the rate of decline from 2017 to 2018 was 2.3%.



For 2019 all Mission Areas have set growth targets ranging from 2% to 10%. This gives a Diocesan growth target of 6% for Average Sunday attendance in 2019. Most important of all, growth is being talked about!



LEGO CHURCH

Altar... candles... communion set... But in addition to the usual church equipment, St Paul's in Llandudno now has boxes of Lego. It gets used at a weekly children's after-school club, run in conjunction with a local nursery. Children hear a story from the bible, and then do a Lego activity connected to what they've just heard. That could be anything from building Lego doves for Pentecost to staging a competition to build the highest tower of Babel.

The idea has gone down well with the children, and with the congregation, who've raided their attics to find more Lego. Recently, St Paul's re-launched a monthly family service, again with a Lego theme, which is starting to attract families from the area to venture into the church for the first time.

LEADING YOUR CHURCH INTO GROWTH (LYCIG)

The diocese has invested in sending people, both lay and ordained, on LyCiG courses, which encourage and equip churches to grow both numerically and spiritually.

		NOS. ATTENDING	TOTALS
RESIDENTIAL COURSES	2017	49	164
	2018	68	
	2019	47	
FOLLOW UP DAYS	2017	98	200
	2018	102	
	2019	Not held yet	
MA LEADER/ BISHOPS STAFF TRAINING DAY	2018	26	26
TOTAL IMPACTS			390

All Mission Areas have been supplied with a LyCiG Local pack and these are running regularly in some areas and gaining traction in others.

The top four pledges made after completing a LyCiG session are:

- Create user-friendly services
- Discuss LyCiG with the Church Committee or Mission Area Conference
- Pray for growth
- Invite people

PLANS GOING FORWARD

- Work has started on a bespoke strategy to support rural mission and ministry. A working party is being assembled to gather information and listen to communities.
- 2020 will see the opening of Hope Street in Wrexham, a space designed for those with little or no experience of traditional church.
- A re-focusing of our communications strategy to reach new audiences.
- A continued investment in LyCiG to focus on the 4 P's: Prayer, Presence, Proclamation, Persuasion.

IMPACT OF LYCIG – FEEDBACK IN 2017

Almost one year after the first LyCiG, Aber-Morfa Mission Area has achieved the following:

1. Changed the noticeboards: They removed the NO Parking signs and change them to Welcome
2. Started a regular monthly prayer group for growth
3. Started LYCIG local courses for the church committees
4. Ran START courses
5. Ran 'Moving On' Courses
6. Set up Bereavement Care groups in local cafes
7. Held a stall at Rhyl Air Show with flyers and freebies
8. Launched Bingo sessions – those who come are mainly non-church people
9. Make glossy invitations/publicity material (paid for by the proceeds of Bingo!)
10. Opened a specific church growth fund – to finance new initiatives
11. Launched a group aimed at toddlers and their families; invites are given at pre-baptism meetings and at the baptisms
12. Lots of work has been done on welcoming and comments have been received on how the atmosphere has changed





Developing Steering Group



























































by Canon Chancellor Pam Powell, Lead Officer and Director of Ministry

The developing steering group comprises 12 members and seeks to support the ministry, formation and training of all, both lay and clergy, across the diocese. You can find out more at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/find-your-calling/>

The diocese has 75 clergy supporting congregations in 216 churches in 21 Mission Areas across three archdeaconries.

VOCATIONS

This year has been active in terms of discernment, in particularly to a wider range of ministries. The age range of people testing their calling, has also widened, with younger people following a vocation, particularly for stipendiary priestly ministry.

MINISTRY CATEGORY	NUMBER
Curates (Full Time/stipendiary)	     
Curates (Part Time/NSM)	         
Youth Chaplain stipendiary	 
In training for Priest (S)	        
In training for Priest (NSM)	     
In training for Diaconate	
In Training for Reader	    
In Training for Evangelist	
In training for Pastoral Chaplain	 
Early Stages of Discernment	               

Work has been done this year to bring Vocation Advisers and Selectors together to clarify roles and help candidates. Work with Mission Area Leaders means that there is now a more Mission Area-focus regarding placements. Mission Areas are being encouraged to build and discern teams to grow together in relation to their context. Cedewain has been successful in this.



SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

In September 2018, a course to train new spiritual directors began with Bangor Diocese. Five people from St Asaph meet monthly for training and if all are successful, the College of Spiritual Direction will increase by 22%. This will help meet the increased number of applications for spiritual directors, a result of the higher number of candidates for ministry.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The Spiritual Formation group has responded to requests from Mission Areas and other groups to provide support for Quiet and/or Prayer Days. The Spiritual Formation group, in conjunction with the Mission Area, devise a suitable programme and suggest resources, drawn from a variety of sources, including materials provided for the diocese by our former Missioner in Residence, Mark Yaconelli. Sessions have also been offered by members of the Spiritual Formation group for the Training Together programme.

Work has begun on a revision of the Diocesan Rule of Life and a Spirituality Toolkit.

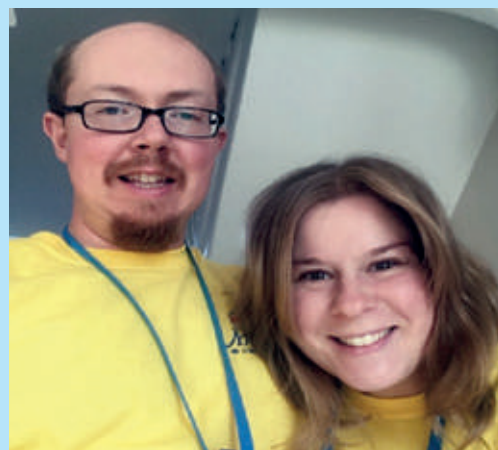


JON AND ESTHER ANDREWS – YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S CHAPLAINS

We have been in formation for full-time licensed ministry as Youth and Children's Chaplains at St Padarn's for the last two years. This training has involved Theology for Life, leading college worship as part of a team, attending residentials and a placement. Esther has been on placement in the Aber-Morfa Mission Area, and Jon has worked in the Bryn a Môr and Estuary and Mountain Mission Areas.

Placements have been hugely varied and have seen us getting stuck into school assemblies, teaching RE lessons, Messy Church, all-age services and being part of the team in various youth/children's clubs. We have also been privileged to take part in other youth work, such as helping a group of young people to lead worship at the Diocesan Conference and accompanying the Youth Forum on weekends away to the Christian Mountain Centre.

After licensing, Esther will be employed in the Denbigh and Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Areas, and Jon will be working in Aled Mission Area. Training has given us a theological grounding for employment, lifelong friends and the chance to fulfil what we believe God is calling us to do. It has been challenging as our training pathway has been a pioneer project for the diocese, but we are excited for what lies ahead!





Engaging Steering Group

by Sarah Wheat, Lead Officer for the Engaging Steering Group

The Engaging Steering Group seeks to challenge social injustice and stand alongside those on the margins of society. It runs and supports projects across the diocese, with members of the group pioneering and reporting back on their work. Details of the projects can be found at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/faith-in-action/>

HOLIDAY HUNGER

Since 2015, projects to tackle holiday hunger and support children and families have been run by churches across the Diocese. They use a simple but effective format: Churches work with local, open access play provisions to deliver packed lunches to children who might otherwise go hungry. This format enables churches and communities to come together and, for a small cost, provide a simple meal for children and young people in their local area. It allows local play provision to continue their excellent work, while enhancing the children's experience of the school holidays by providing a much-needed meal.

Provision has been run in the following areas:

Rhyl	200 per week each school holiday.
Caia Park (2 location)	250 per week during Christmas, Easter and Summer.
Brymbo	40 per week. All holidays except Feb half term and Christmas.
Gwersyllt	40 per week. All holidays except Feb half term and Christmas.
Coedpoeth	60 per week. All holidays except Feb half term and Christmas.
Plas Madoc	200 per week. All school holidays.
Abergele	400 in total during summer holidays 2018.



'...We had by far one of our least problematic summers when it came to dealing with challenging behaviour... instances of bad behaviour were very much the exception rather than the norm and... [we] put this fact largely down to the food available during the course of the day.' An edited extract from Play, Playwork and Food on playwales.org.uk

MODERN SLAVERY

We partner with Haven of Light to offer awareness raising sessions delivered as requested. In October 2018, as part of Modern Slavery Week, we ran a week of events at St Asaph Cathedral, featuring a display of the Stop the Traffic Gift Box and a film and discussion evening.

In November 2018, we held an awareness raising event specific to those working with people experiencing homelessness. Over 30 people attended from different agencies and groups.



DEMENTIA FRIENDLY DIOCESE

Having received recognition for being a Diocese working towards becoming dementia friendly by the Alzheimer's Society, we secured funding from the Henry Smith Foundation to continue to employ a part time Dementia Support Officer. Bob Friedrich has been working with our churches and Mission Areas to raise awareness and support churches to become more dementia friendly.

WE HAVE...



4 churches in our diocese recognised by the Alzheimer's Society via our Dementia Steering Group as working towards becoming dementia friendly.

Organised **10** Dementia Friends Sunday Services, offering people the chance of attending Sunday worship, raising awareness of dementia and becoming a Dementia Friend.



393 Dementia Friends across our diocese.

Set up **9** Dementia Projects, with more in development.



Delivered a Diocesan wide event to mark Dementia Action Day offering support, advice and information to churches and congregations on how to be more dementia friendly and raise awareness of dementia.



HOPE AND A FUTURE

Hope and a Future courses encourage church congregations to engage in and with their local community. We deliver different forms of the course to churches to encourage churches and congregations to have a vision for working together to address the needs of their community. In June 2018, 45 people attended a one-day event in Llangollen with a focus on how the church can respond positively to people struggling with mental health issues.

COLD WEATHER NIGHT SHELTER

During the winter of 2018/2019 we partnered with Housing Justice Cymru and Wrexham Council to open a Wrexham Church and Community Cold Weather Shelter. It offered 10 emergency beds for a 10 week period during the coldest time of the year to those experiencing homelessness.



Using **7** church venues (**3 of them CinW**) over **69 nights** run by our pool of **153 trained volunteers**.



Volunteers contributed **3,950** shift hours to run the night shelter. Many more hours were contributed in setting up beds, washing bedding, buying food and driving the mini bus.



Wrexham Council Outreach Worker referred **19** guests to the project (**3 female**) of those referrals **18 guests** stayed in the shelter.

3 guests secured a modular home in a new project run by Wrexham Council (our guests secured all the tenancies available).



At the end of the project **50%** of guests had either secured some form of accommodation or moved in with a family member.



AN EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM A MOTHER OF A HOMELESS SON

...The knowledge that there are people that provide this service without questioning or judgement must, I believe give hope to many homeless individuals knowing that they are valued as human beings who deserve at least a roof over their heads. As a mum I too have been able to rest easier knowing my son is not out in the cold. My son is much-loved and hopefully will find his way in life and move away from the path he has been choosing. I thank you all once again.



Nurturing Steering Group

by Rosalind Williams, Lead Officer and Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

The Nurturing Steering Group supports the work of our 51 church schools and all work with children and young people. More details can be found at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/>

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW CURRICULUM

A new curriculum in Wales will be launched in 2022 and Church Schools and the Diocesan Board of Education have an important role in making sure that it reflects our distinctiveness and ethos and develops the uniqueness of our Welsh heritage and culture. We are piloting projects to ensure that we are fully prepared to embrace the changes and working with Welsh Government on a framework for RE. Case studies will be made available with a strong emphasis on enquiry-based learning, often using the context of the schools' local environment as the focus.





WILLIAM MORGAN PROJECT

Year 5 pupils at Esgob Morgan Church in Wales School in St Asaph used enquiry skills to research the life of Bishop William Morgan, asking big questions such as Who was William Morgan and what was his legacy to Wales? This project aligns to the 'What Matters' statements from the Humanites AoLE. (New Curriculum for Wales). Using a sense of place and 'cynefin' the project was based around the area of St Asaph, extending across the Diocese and further afield as the pupils engaged with writing letters to potential sources of information such as: Cambridge University, St Asaph Cathedral, Local Records Office, The Bible Society, St Fagan's Museum and the National Trust. The project generated great interest and provided an ideal context through which to engage fully with the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales.



LEAVERS' SERVICES

This year, the Education Team held Leavers' Services marking the transition of Year 6 pupils from primary to secondary school. There were two services: We welcomed over 400 pupils to the Cathedral and 140 pupils to Welshpool.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Every summer we gather in the Cathedral to give thanks for all involved in our Church schools. The Schools' Thanksgiving Service welcomes Headteachers, teachers, administrators, catering staff, caretakers, and our Governors, Bishops Visitors, Board of Education and our Local Authority, Consortia and Welsh Government partners.

HEADTEACHERS RETREAT

The second headteachers retreat was held at the end of the academic year. It has grown from six participants to over 20. Colleagues join us in the Cathedral for a day dedicated to wellbeing and spiritual renewal through prayer, reflection and activities.



NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The Welsh Government's 21st Century School and Education Programme represents the largest infrastructure investment in our schools since the 1960s, and the Diocese of St Asaph has been working diligently in conjunction with our Local Authorities to ensure our Church schools benefit. We have two new school builds currently under construction.



WELSHPOOL CHURCH IN WALES PRIMARY SCHOOL

was established in September 2017 and is currently a multi-site school operating on three former school sites. The new English-medium Church in Wales School is being

built on playing fields at Welshpool High School. This project is in partnership with Powys County Council.

The school will be built to Passivhaus standards - the world's most rigorous energy and comfort standard, underpinned by a robust certification process.

YSGOL LLANFAIR DC

is a new bilingual church school that is being built on land opposite Bryn y Clwyd, Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd.

This project is in partnership with Denbighshire County Council. The school building will have the latest up to date facilities along with a car park, and improved staff areas, public areas and accessibility to the school.



Both schools have a purpose-built reflection space which has been designed into the building from the initial planning stages. This puts the Christian ethos at the heart of the new schools.



Under 25s work

INTERNATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP / CONFIRMATION LINK

2019 has seen the start of the International Discipleship / Confirmation Link with the Diocese of Helsinki. A group of 11 young people visited Finland in June and 15 young people are due to visit this diocese from Helsinki in October. Young people from all over the diocese and from many walks of life are attending this trip. We are delighted that the diocese is able to prioritise a bursary scheme to subsidise travel and accommodation. This will continue over the next five years and will ensure that lack of funding does not prohibit participation in this life changing experience.

YOUTH PILGRIMAGE

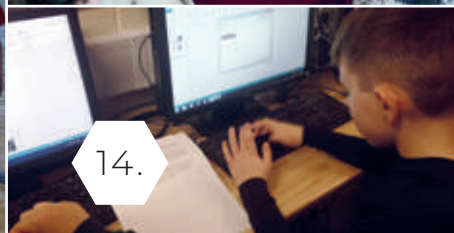
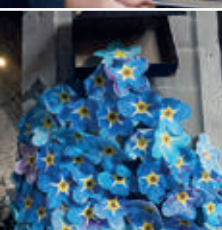
The Youth Pilgrimage has continued to grow. A group of 22 young people from all over the Diocese are participating this year. This continues to be a truly transformational experience for many young people.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Another excellent Diocesan Youth Weekend Away is planned for Autumn 2019. Mission Area Youth and Children's Work has developed in many exciting ways including new youth groups, Open the Book, Messy Church, Prayer Spaces in Schools, parent and baby / toddler groups, play schemes and some very creative work with local schools to name a few examples.

EDUCATIONAL CHAPLAINCY

The Coleg Cambria and Glyndŵr University Chaplaincies continue. This year saw the launch of a Mission Area Chaplaincy Team in Bryn Hyfryd Secondary School, Ruthin.





Property

by Michael Plane, Churches Inspector

The property team looks after 216 churches, 136 residential properties like vicarages and rentals, and numerous other buildings and parcels of land. There are three members of the property team supported by an Administrator. Each Mission Area has a Property Committee to oversee the buildings/land owned, managed and used by the Mission Area. For further information, visit <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/property/>

2018/19 was the first year of the new in-house Quinquennial Inspection Survey programme for churches. 44 churches were inspected, and illustrated reports completed and circulated to relevant church and Mission Area teams.

QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTIONS

The Churches Inspector carried out:



9

Mission Areas visits to see their 85 churches.

44

Quinquennial visits.



70

churches visited to offer advice in advance of Faculty applications.

6

presentations/visits to Mission Area Property Committees.



The in-house approach means:

- A uniform standard is applied to the inspection and reporting process
- Good relationships are developed with Church Wardens
- Useful discussions can take place about repairs or alterations

We continue to work with the National Churches Trust in the promotion of the Maintenance Booker service. Several of our Churches have signed-up and are using it for specialist cyclical maintenance works.

PROPERTY STRATEGY

Whilst many Mission Areas now have well-established Property Committees, some are in their infancy. We have developed a Property Toolkit to assist Mission Area Committees and Wardens to best-manage their buildings. We have also prepared a short guide to thinking about property strategically.

Throughout the year we have made short visits to each Church in nine of the Mission Areas to better understanding the communities our Churches serve, and the challenges and opportunities presented by some of these buildings and locations. The intention is to make similar visits to each Mission Area over the coming year.

PROPERTY FORUMS

These are new opportunities for Mission Area and Church Wardens and Property Committee Members to meet with the Diocesan Property and Funding teams. Two have been organised so far and these have been supported by colleagues from the Representative Body, CADW and Ecclesiastical Insurance. The forums have already identified some areas of common concern, enabled the sharing of expertise and built relationships across the diocese.

FACULTIES

Faculties are now carried out online, via
<https://churchheritagecymru.org.uk/>

THERE ARE THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FACULTIES:

- 1. List A applications** cover routine maintenance or minor like for like repairs. Last year 46 List A applications were scrutinised, of which 6 were rejected as they should have been List B or Full Faculty applications. All rejections were dealt with within 5 days. (all bar 1 in 1 day).
- 2. List B applications** cover straightforward works (boiler replacement, etc) that have little or no impact on the historic fabric of the church. 32 List B applications were fully completed to approval by the Registrar. 4 were submitted as List B but rejected as a full faculty application was required. The average time taken for a List B application through to grant was 36 days.
- 3. Full Faculty Applications** are also now online. 33 Full faculties were completed to issue of faculty notice for 2018, with an average time taken of 78 days.

At the end of the year 13 full faculty applications were still ongoing. There have been no appeals against DAC recommendation/non recommendation. There was 1 faculty not recommended which was withdrawn.

FUNDING

It has been a productive year for many of our churches in securing funds for their projects. Some have received large sums from the main funders e.g. Lottery, whilst others have benefited from smaller sums from a wide range of funders.

The funding process is becoming more difficult, as the amount available has been reduced and there is more competition for less funds.

Some notable successes:

Llanrwst, St Grwst's Church has secured funding of over £900,000 for its project, including a £707,000 grant from Heritage Lottery. The ambitious project will reorder the Grade I listed building, including installing a kitchen and toilets, and bring to life the unique and rich Welsh heritage contained within the church.

Ruthin St Peter's has received a grant from Heritage Lottery for £96,000 towards the restoration and repair of its bells and bell frame. The project was based on the heritage of the bells and their status within the local community.



St Mary's Treuddyn required funding of over £15,000 for roof and plaster repairs. They made several applications including to the Diocese, Garfield Weston, Churchfield Trust (Buckley) and Flintshire Welsh Churches. They were successful in raising the amount required.

Between June 2018 and June 2019, the funding department researched and compiled strategies for 27 potential projects requiring funding – this amounts to over £2.5 million.





PARSONAGES AND RENTAL PROPERTIES

We manage 136 residential properties, both parsonages and lettings. They are a mixture of property types and ages, ranging from the grade II* 17th century vicarage in Berriew, (inscribed with the date 1616 on the oak frame tie beam), to modern new-build properties.

WE HAVE:

42 rental properties that generate income – this is re-invested into the repair and upkeep of the property portfolio.

OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS, WE HAVE

- Purchased one further property
- Disposed of a parcel of land as a residential building plot
- Disposed of two parsonage properties (Nannerch and Llanfairtalhaiarn)

22 properties have been subject to a change of incumbent and/or tenant over the last 12 months and have been subject to works to prepare for re-occupation.

6 properties have been subject to a major restoration/refurbishment project.

44 properties have oil fired heating systems and we are currently concluding a programme of improvements to upgrade fuel oil tanks and oil feed pipes.

A programme of external cyclical repair and painting is undertaken on a maximum five yearly cycle. This generally involves works to about 25 properties each spring and summer.

Further project works involve the creation of Mission Area Offices across the Diocese that are partially funded by the Parsonage Improvement Fund up to a budget ceiling of £20,000.

Works to establish Mission Area Offices have been completed in the Alyn and Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Areas, with two further offices planned for the Aber Morfa and Estuary and Mountain Mission Areas.

Works are ongoing to convert the former Rectory in Colwyn Bay into two residential units for letting.

We receive and manage emergency requests for repairs and maintenance 24/7 and have a network of contractors that can respond on our behalf. The number of emergencies peak at times of inclement weather and at the beginning of the heating season in particular. Following Storm Gareth in March 2019, we had a weekend emergency call after a substantial branch from a Leyland Cypress tree came down close to a vicarage. The necessary consents were secured and the entire tree had to be felled.





Finance

by Diane McCarthy, Diocesan Secretary

The Diocesan Board of Finance is made up of elected lay and clerical representatives from churches from across the diocese, along with ex-officio members.

REVIEW OF 2018

The Board continues to steward and direct the financial resources of the diocese to build the Kingdom and to share the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Overall, the 2018 accounts show a deficit for the year on the General Fund of £109,923. The budgeted deficit was £382,270 so this represents a better out turn on operations than originally forecast. Our challenge remains to balance essential investment in growth and support for new initiatives without putting too much pressure on individual churches. The Board takes seriously its responsibility to support all our churches through this period of intense change, financially and pastorally, as we seek to build a stronger church for 2020 and beyond.

The largest element of our diocesan budget (79%) continues to relate to clergy costs. These costs include stipends, pensions and housing costs. The Board also allocates funds to support the work of the Diocesan Steering Groups in the vital areas of Developing, Engaging and Nurturing all the people of God. It funds the work of the Diocesan Office Team which provides sustained support to the life of our churches and Mission Areas.

Our local churches continue to meet a significant part of the total costs of running the diocese and we are grateful to them for their ongoing support of mission and ministry. There was an increase of

3% in the Mission Area Share in 2018 to cover an increase of 2.7% in clergy stipends and lay salaries, and an increase of 2.7% in clergy housing costs. The annual block grant from the Representative Body of the Church in Wales represented 23% of diocesan income.

In 2018, all of our 21 Mission Areas had adopted Mission Area Finance. The contribution of each church to the total Mission Area Share is agreed in advance by the constituent churches, and all churches within the same Mission Area need to pay their share in full and on time in order to allow the Mission Area Discount Scheme to pay out. In 2018, 20 of the 21 Mission Areas qualified for this discount. We are especially grateful to all our church treasurers for their dedicated and loyal service. The last year has been particularly challenging as new accounting software has been introduced for all our churches and our treasurers have risen to the challenge magnificently.

The value of diocesan reserves fell at the end of 2018 due to particularly challenging Stock Market conditions in the final quarter of 2018. Much of this loss was recovered in the first quarter of 2019 but the economic outlook remains uncertain against a volatile global political landscape. In particular, the ongoing uncertainty regarding Brexit continues to unsettle the financial markets.



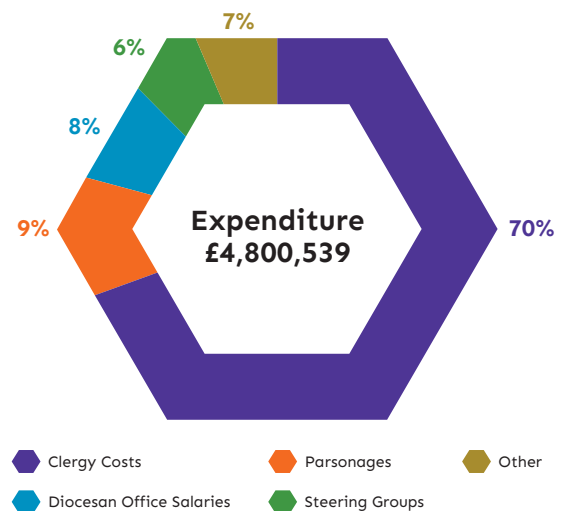
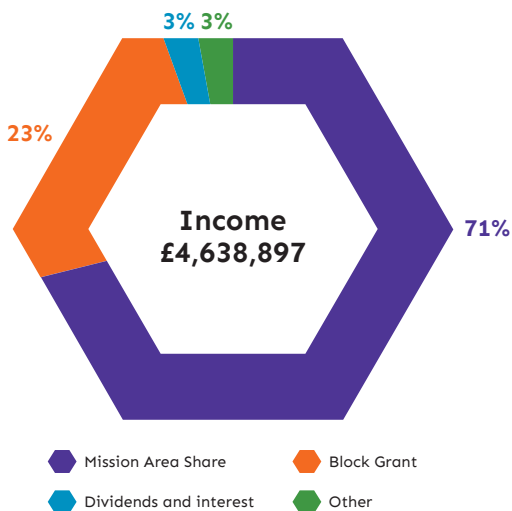


Looking to the Future

FUTURE PLANS – PRIORITIES FOR 2019 AND BEYOND

- Effective financial management and forward planning to support the delivery of diocesan strategy.
- Planned and managed reduction of the current deficit on operations over the next five years, with a return to a balanced budget or modest surpluses from 2020 onwards.
- Investment in the Hope Street Project, in partnership with the Church in Wales Evangelism Fund.
- Investment in the development of a creative and comprehensive rural strategy to secure and reimagine mission and ministry in our rural areas.
- Ensuring robust and coherent proposals for Mission Area financial arrangements and supporting churches through this change with appropriate consultation, training and communication.
- Support for the Leading Your Church into Growth programme as we seek to grow our church in mission and evangelism, in spirituality and in numbers.

2019 BUDGET



This means that for every £1 of diocesan income:

- 71p comes from Mission Area Share
- 23p comes from the Church in Wales in Cardiff
- 3p is the income from the diocese's investments
- 3p is from other sources such as legacies and grants

This means that for every £1 of diocesan expenditure:

- 79p goes on clergy costs, including housing
- 8p pays for the salaries of the Diocesan Office team
- 6p funds the work of the Steering Groups
- 7p goes on other costs such as legal support, buildings costs, communications and grants awarded



Keeping in touch

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